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Letter dated 21 March 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I transmit to you herewith a letter dated 21 March 2003 from Mr. Taha Yasin Ramadan, Vice-President of the Republic of Iraq, concerning the condemnation by the Government of the Republic of Iraq of the submission by the Secretariat of a draft resolution containing changes to be made in the oil-for-food programme in order to serve United States and British hostile intentions towards Iraq.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Mohammed A. **Aldouri**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 21 March 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I felt I must write to you after realizing that it was essential to be frank with you and inform you of facts that are sure to be of assistance to the Secretariat of the United Nations in fulfilling its responsibilities under the Charter of the United Nations, and specifically the provisions of its article 100, which states: "In the performance of their duties the Secretary-General and the staff shall not seek or receive instructions from any government or from any other authority external to the Organization. They shall refrain from any action which might reflect on their position as international officials responsible only to the Organization."

Sixteen March 2003 was a memorable day in the history of the United Nations Security Council, for on that day the overwhelming majority of the members of the Security Council, supported by the entire international community, declared that they would not permit the adoption of the aggressive American-British war draft in the Security Council. Thus the United States met with a resounding failure in its attempt to obtain international cover for the aggression it was plotting against Iraq and the region.

To offset its ignominious defeat, the United States exerted pressure on the United Nations Secretariat to implement some of the pages of its evil and hostile imperialist war plan. Most unfortunately it succeeded in that effort, inasmuch as on 17 March 2003 the Secretariat decided to withdraw all international staff working in Iraq, in a disgraceful shirking of the responsibilities of the United Nations in four of its most important areas of work, namely disarmament, peacekeeping, humanitarian work and development. Indeed, the withdrawal of the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM) has enabled the United States of America and the United Kingdom to use the demilitarized zone between Iraq and Kuwait as a corridor for their shock troops. The withdrawal of the staff of the oil-for-food programme has put an end to the supplying of the basic humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people. The withdrawal of the staff of the United Nations specialized agencies has terminated the activities of those health and development agencies in Iraq. The withdrawal of the inspectors of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) brought to a standstill the work of those two organizations, which is fundamental not only for verifying completely that Iraq is free of weapons of mass destruction but also for satisfying the remaining requirements of the Security Council resolutions connected with the completion of the inspection operations, above all the lifting of the unjust sanctions imposed on Iraq.

It is clear to the international community that the withdrawal of United Nations staff was done by the Secretariat in compliance with the hostile American-British scheme, which is in violation of international law, international humanitarian law, the Charter of the United Nations and the Security Council resolutions on Iraq and devoid of any legal or moral justification. It was also done in violation of the mechanisms in place and without the approval of the Security Council, which had created all those activities.

The United Nations Secretariat, after withdrawing the staff of the humanitarian programme (the oil-for-food programme) on grounds of fear for their security and

safety owing to the possibility that they might be exposed to bombs from United States aircraft that would bomb Iraqi towns, proceeded on 19 March 2003 to submit to the Security Council a draft resolution calling for amendments to the oil-for-food programme. The truth of the matter, however, is that it is an American-British draft resolution aimed at the revocation of Security Council resolution 986 (1991) and the Memorandum of Understanding of 20 May 1996 between the Government of Iraq and the Secretary-General of the United Nations. More properly, it is the abrogation of principles contained in the Charter of the United Nations, specifically the principle of equality of rights among peoples, the principle of sovereign equality among States, the principle of respect for the territorial integrity and independence of States and the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of States. This draft transforms the Secretary-General of the United Nations into a "High Commissioner" who disposes of Iraq's assets in the "Iraq account" created out of the sales of Iraqi oil, with the reservation of part of those funds for activities unrelated to the humanitarian programme, but having rather, in some cases, a political and intelligence-related nature.

It is indeed regrettable and reprehensible that the Secretariat should have presented this dubious draft resolution, which amounts to nothing more than a rubber stamp for the intended aggression against Iraq, overzealousness in violating international law and shameful piracy of the assets of the Iraqi people on the very day on which the United States and Britain launched their brutal and cowardly colonialist attack on that people (19 March 2003). It is a shameful material breach of international law, the Charter of the United Nations and the Security Council resolutions on Iraq, all of which stress respect for Iraq's sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity. It is also regrettable and reprehensible that the Secretariat has not issued any statement or reaction condemning or denouncing that aggression. Nor has the Secretary-General of the United Nations addressed any letter to the Security Council, under Article 99 of the Charter, to bring to its attention that such aggression constitutes the gravest threat to international peace and security and threatens the fate and future of the United Nations in its very core.

The questionable American-British draft resolution, which most regrettably bears your signature and calls for an end to the role of the Iraqi State in the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding, is based on a loathsome, racist-imperialist delusion that drives the high-handed oppressors in Washington and London, namely the extinction of the State of Iraq and the conversion of the region into colonies subject to the international Zionist and American oil mafia.

The Government of the Republic of Iraq signed with your predecessor, former Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, a Memorandum of Understanding for the implementation of the oil-for-food programme as a temporary measure to meet the pressing humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people. It is the Government of Iraq that produces and exports the oil, establishes the resource distribution plan for purchased items, purchases foodstuffs, medicine and other humanitarian supplies, distributes them among the Iraqi people and sees to the faithful implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding. What the Secretariat does is supervise implementation and withhold large sums of Iraqi funds for that task and for the purpose of deducting from them amounts taken from the Iraqi people and offering them, in what is clearly an operation of piracy and thievery, within the framework of so-called "compensation". The hundreds of millions of dollars currently in the United Nations administrative expense account (the 2.2 per cent account) bear

witness to this. How can the United Nations Secretariat think of playing the role of colonialist high commissioner over the Iraqi people? Is there anything in the Charter of the United Nations that would permit the Secretariat of the United Nations to act on behalf of two outlaw States in order to detract from the sovereignty of Iraq, a founding member of the United Nations, and to steal its money?

The Government of the Republic of Iraq wishes to inform you that it absolutely rejects this futile draft submitted by the Secretariat on behalf of the Governments of the United States and the United Kingdom and considers that draft as an enormous insult to the United Nations and the Secretary-General and as greatly undermining the credibility of the international Organization. We wish to inform you that just as the people, the army and the Government of Iraq, under the leadership of its President and triumphant commander Saddam Hussein (may God save and protect him), will continue their glorious defence of their homeland, their honour and their independence in the face of the greedy American invaders, with the same might they will defend their right to their wealth. Nor will they allow the thieves of Washington, who have taken possession of Iraq's assets deposited in United States banks, to stretch out their hands to steal the funds of the Memorandum of Understanding, riding on the back of the Secretariat of the United Nations in their attempt to perpetrate such a lowly act of thievery.

Everyone now knows that the United States seeks to buy international civil servants to serve its despicable aggressive interests. Yet the records of the international Organization are replete with names of international civil servants who have refused to have their honour impugned and have not deigned to become cheap instruments for carrying out the bellicose desires of the United States, but rather maintained their integrity and the inviolability of their international functions, responsibilities and commitments under the Charter of the United Nations. In so doing they have preserved the existence and the prestige of the United Nations. We hoped and continue to hope that the staff of the Secretariat, and especially its Secretary-General, are just such civil servants who value their honour, uphold their international responsibilities and reject degrading insults to the United Nations and its international civil servants at the hands of the imperialist oppressors.

Last of all, I want to caution that the profound crisis faced by the United Nations today as a result of the American-British hostile attack on Iraq and the failure of the United Nations to maintain the system of collective security founded on the principles of the Charter may become yet more profound unless the Secretariat take steps for the literal, strict implementation of article 100 of the Charter, and especially paragraph 1 of that article, which states, "In the performance of their duties the Secretary-General and the staff shall not seek or receive instructions from any government or from any other authority external to the Organization".

(*Signed*) Taha Yasin **Ramadan**
Vice-President of the Republic